IRISH

BIBLICAL

STUDIES

CONTENTS

THE DUAL OCCURRENCES OF קוֹם IN THE BOOK OF AMOS

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INTRODUCTION

In a recent article, John Crossan suggested that Biblical studies should no longer be considered a single discipline but a "field of disciplines" including anthropology, sociology, and literary methods as well as the older historical-critical methods.[1] In other words, Crossan argues for a marriage of diachronic and synchronic methodologies in order to more adequately understand the Biblical text at hand and its formation. Since the publication of Crossan's article, his suggestion has become an increasingly accepted matter of fact in Biblical studies. Perhaps one of the most fruitful areas for such investigation is that portion of prophetic literature which falls somewhere between the two extremes of "poetry" and "prose" and which shares characteristics of each. This essay is an examination of three examples of a literary device which is normally associated with Hebrew poetry - parallelism. I will examine three occurrences of parallel uses of the Hebrew verb קוֹם in the prophecy of Amos. These three parallel patterns are taken from sections of the book which are generally considered to be the result of successive stages of redaction.[2] Leaving aside the question of the history of the

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[1] John Crossan, "Ruth Amid the Alien Corn: Perspectives and Methods in Contemporary Biblical Criticism," in R. Polzin and E. Rothman eds., <u>The Biblical Mosaic</u>, (Semeia Studies; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982) p. 199-210.

[2] For discussions on the redaction of the book of Amos see H. W. Wolff, <u>Joel and Amos</u>, (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977). Robert Coote, <u>Amos Among the Prophets: Composition and Theology</u>, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981).

ormation of the text, I will suggest that these three arallel uses of קום signal the progression of a alvation theme found in Amos 5-9.

ARIOUS FUNCTIONS OF HEBREW PARALLELISM

The line of demarcation separating Biblical prose nd poetry has recently been challenged by James Kugel. e prefers to see in the Biblical writings (he uestions whether the term "literature" may be orrectly applied to the Bible) more or less of an elevated style" rather than the imposition of the abel "prose" or "poetry."[3] Certainly, Kugel's position as met with a mixed reception from Biblical scholars, evertheless, he does without question make very clear hat the distinctions which have normally been made etween Biblical prose and poetry must be considered autiously. The line, if any at all, separating the two s very fine.[4]

Adele Berlin has written that repetition is "one f the most extensive devices in the Bible, taking many

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James Kugel, <u>The</u> <u>Idea</u> <u>of</u> <u>Biblical</u> <u>Poetry:</u> <u>Parallelism</u> nd <u>Its</u> <u>History</u>, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 981), p. 85.

William Holladay, while discussing difficulties ncountered in the "poetic" sections of the book of eremiah, wrote that "there is more than one extended assage in Jeremiah about whose nature - poetry or rose - there is no unanimity at all." William olladay, "The Recovery of Poetic Passages of eremiah," <u>Journal</u> <u>of</u> <u>Biblical</u> <u>Literature</u>, 85 (1966): 01. This lack of consensus is due to the numerous ways n which literary devices are employed by the Biblical riters and the apparent flexibility of the conventions hich govern the usage of those devices.

different forms."[5] Further, she adds that repetition is "a key to perception, to interpretation; it calls attention to the similarity of two things or utterances, and may also be calling attention to their differences."[6] Regarding the parallelistic device in Hebrew writing, Kugel adds "this is the first thing to be grasped about parallelism: it was an extraordinarily versatile and popular form of expression, one that almost anyone could use almost anywhere. Parallelistic lines appear throughout the Bible, not only in "poetic" parts but in the midst of narratives."[7] Kugel goes on to state that parallelism, and the phenomena which he labels "seconding sequence" is found almost everywhere in the Hebrew Bible.[8] In fact, "seconding", Kugel states, is a "reflex of the language" turning up "in every conceivable context."[9]

As the scholars cited here have indicated, parallelism can take many forms in Hebrew literature. One particular form of parallelism, in which the parallel elements are found in distant parts of narrative, was investigated by S. Talmon.[10] Contrary to an earlier consensus of Biblical scholars which concluded parallel readings as a sure sign of multiple sources, Talmon suggested that the readings were designed to frame and highlight specific points of the narrative rather than representing untidy editorial

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[5] Adele Berlin, <u>Poetics</u> <u>and</u> <u>Interpretation</u> <u>of</u> <u>Biblical</u> <u>Narrative</u>, (Sheffield: Almond Press, 1983), p. 136.

[6] Berlin, <u>Poetics</u> <u>and</u> <u>Interpretation</u>, p. 136.

[7] Kugel, <u>Idea</u>, p. 3.

[8] Kugel, <u>Idea</u>, p. 59.

[9] Kugel, <u>Idea</u>, p. 61.

[10] S. Talmon, "Synonymous Readings in the Textual Traditions of the OT," <u>Scripta</u> <u>Hierosolymitana</u>, 8 (1961), p. 335-383.

remains. Berlin, too, is of the opinion that repetitions found in narratives such as 1 Sam 19:12 and 19:18 as well as in 1 Sam 4:11 and 4:22 indicate two perspectives which are synchronous and by which the author allows[11] the reader to switch viewpoints within one account. By utilizing the repetition of key phrases the author in 1 Sam 4 allows the reader to approach the story of the capture of the ark first from the viewpoint of the Israelites and then in chapter 5 from the viewpoint of the Philistines. Instead of marking the remnants of two, once separate, sources the repeating formula constitutes a literary device which allows the author to tell a complex story from multiple vantage points. Distant parallelism is not limited to narrative but is found in "poetry" as well and adds thematic structure to the literary piece.[12] The following examination suggests that a form of distant parallelism was incorporated into the thematic structure of Amos 5-9.

OCCURRENCES OF קום IN AMOS

It comes as no surprise that parallelism turns up in the writing attributed to the prophet Amos. The question is not whether parallelism exists in the book, but if certain forms of that parallelism serve a thematic structure.[13] The parallelisms which are

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[11] Berlin, Poetics and Interpretation, p. 126.

[12] Wilfred Watson, Classical Hebrew Poetry: A Guide to its Techniques, (Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 26; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1984), p. 286.

[13] For a definition of parallelism which focuses upon the function of the devise see Roman Jakobson, "Linguistics and Poetics," Style in Language, ed. T. Sebeok (Cambridge, MA.: M.I.T. Press, 1960), p. 358. See also Adele Berlin, The Dynamics of Biblical Parallelism, (Bloomington, IN.: University of Indiana

examined here revolve around the use of קוּם in Amos.
The significance of this term in prophetic writing was
alluded to by James Ross. [14] He took up the challenge of
comparing prophetic texts from Hamath, Israel, and Mari
by focusing upon certain key words and phrases which
appeared with frequency in all three settings. One of
the characteristic verbs which he identified was the
Hebrew verb קוֹם and its semantic equivalents. [15] The verb
or its equivalent was used to describe the desired
posture of the deity on behalf of the plaintiff.
Correspondingly, in "rising" on behalf of the
plaintiff, the deity could "rise" against the enemies
of the worshipper.

A lexical study of Amos reveals several surprising
facts about the use of קוּם in the book. Cognates of the
verb לקוּם appear 10 times in the book of Amos (ואקים
2:11, קוּם 5:2, מקימה 5:2, מקים 6:14, [16] יקים 7:2, יקום
7:5, וקמתי 7:9, יקומו 8:14, אקים 9:11, אקים 9:11). Of
these 10 occurrences לקוּם is used in the sense of
"revive", "raise up", or "stand" (in the sense of
"renew") in 5:2, 7:2, 7:5, 8:14, 9:11. These
occurrences represent a relatively high frequency of
the use of קוּם when compared to the other prophetic
writings, especially those from the eighth century
prophetic works. [17] Of these 7 similar usages of the

Press, 1985), p. 9.

[14] James Ross, "Prophecy in Hamath, Israel, and Mari,"
Harvard Theological Review, 63 (1970), p. 1-28.

[15] Ross, "Prophecy in Hamath," p. 9.

[16] Wolff, commenting on this verse, states that here
Amos uses the verb קוֹם differently than is typical in
the Deuteronomic History. This observation supports the
contention that קוֹם is of unusual significance in Amos.
Wolff, Joel and Amos, p. 170.

[17] The use of קוּם with the sense of "revive" or

verb, 6 appear in parallel phrases (5:2a and b, 7:2, 7:5, and 9:11a and b). In all 6 of these instances the object of the verb is essentially the same, that being the people of Israel or a representative element of the nation (9:11, "booth of David" and "ruins"). Each of these dual occurrences of קוּם comes at the beginning of a major section in the book of Amos.[18] Chapters 5-6 are comprised of a series of oracles addressed to בית ישראל as contrasted with the בני ישראל of chapters 3-4. Beginning the series of addresses to בית ישראל is the chiasm of 5:1-17. Chapters 7-9:4 (minus 7:10-17) form a series of visions. The salvation oracle at the end of the book comprises 9:11-15. The placement of these dual occurrences of קוּם is strategic, following hard after

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"restore" is also found in Is 44:26; 49:6,8; 58:12; 61:4; 51:17; 52:2; 26:19; 24:20. Of these the most pertinent for the present study are 49:6,8 referring to "Jacob", 58:12 and 61:4 which have reference to "the ancient ruins", and 51:17 and 52:2 both of which refer to "Jerusalem." Jeremiah uses קוּם in this fashion five times. Twice the reference is to "David" (23:5; 30:9) and once to the "promise" of God (33:14). In 50:32 a phrase reminiscent of Amos 5:2 is given in which it is stated that Babylon would fall with אין לו מקים ("none to raise him up"). Jer 8:4, the final occurrence in which קוּם is used in this manner, is in the form of a proverb referring to a fallen man who will surely rise again. Ezekiel uses קוּם in this fashion in 16:60,62, and 34:23 (here in reference to "David"). Micah uses קוּם in the sense of "restore" in 7:8. Hosea 6:2 also refers to the "rising" of the fallen Israelite people.

[18] For a comparative discussion of the structure of Amos see, Roy Melugin, "The Formation of Amos: An Analysis of Exegetical Method," in Paul Achtemeier ed., Seminar Papers, 1 (Society of Biblical Literature; Chico: Scholars Press, 1978), p.369-391. Adri van der Wal, "The Structure of Amos," Journal for the Study of the Old Testament, 26 (1983), p.107-113.

introductory formulae in 5:1 and 7:1. Through the use of קוֹם each section (ch. 5-6, 7:1-9:4, 9:11-15) is introduced by a common figure; the reviving of Israel. Borrowing from Talmon's study we might observe that here too repetition serves to highlight.[19] The beginning of each section brings to mind the opening of the previous section.[20] In Amos, this repetition highlights a theme which is not static but is developed through these three sections so that a progression of thought is displayed.

The first occurrence of קוֹם in parallelism is in 5:2. Here, an impossibility is stated. The virgin Israel is fallen "never to rise again." She is upon the ground with "no one to raise her up." Clearly, the inevitable destruction of the nation of Israel is predicted. Wolff suggests that even the form of the two cola in this verse creates a "mood of despair."[21] The nation is beyond help and there is no one to come to her rescue. The participial construction used here focuses the reader's attention upon the agent of Israel's restoration.[22] In 5:2 that agent is

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[19] Talmon, "Synonymous Readings," p. 380-383.

[20] This function of distant repetition has already been noted by O'Connor. Although O'Connor limits his examples to those separated by only a few lines he does show that repetitive elements not immediately connected serve as organizing principles. M. O'Connor, Hebrew Verse Structure, (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1980), p. 366.

[21] Wolff, Amos, p. 234.

[22] That agency seems to be a concern of קוֹם in 5:2; 7:2,5 is supported by the LXX rendition of 7:2,5. See note #23. Hayes, sensitive to the participial construction, offers an alternative translation, "there is no one who causes her to rise." John Hayes, Amos the Eighth Century Prophet: His Times and His Preaching,

non-existent.

The next dual occurrence of קום offers an improbable possibility. In 7:2,5 the nation's destruction is once again threatened. This time, however, the prophet interposes a mediating objection and the threatened annihilation is withheld. Following each of two successive visions of destruction, the prophet beseeches God to spare the nation. The prophet's plea can be translated, "How can Jacob stand? He is so small."[23] Jacob is not capable of self-support. If the threatened destruction is executed, Jacob will be destroyed for he doesn't have the resources to raise himself. Implied in the prophet's plea is recognition of a possible continuation of the nation which requires the abatement of the divine punishment. If Jacob's recovery is to be realized someone must come forward to offer assistance. The virgin who in 5:2 is on the ground must find someone to "raise her up." In chapter 7 that restoration is possible but yet improbable due to the absence of someone to offer the required aid.

The third parallelism involving קום occurs at the

(Nashville: Abingdon, 1988), p. 155.

[23] LXX renders the phrase, "τίς ἀναστήσει τον Ιακωβ," ("Who will raise up Jacob?"). This avoids the awkward form of קומי whereby "Jacob" is understood as the subject. The LXX prefers יקים making "Jacob" the object. This translaton was followed by a recent commentator, Gary Smith, Amos: A Commentary, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1989), p. 220. In a note this same commentator notices a connection between 7:2 and 5:2 but fails to pursue the relation between the two verses. Smith, Amos, p. 224. Here, I follow the MT reading yet understand that an agent is required to enable "Jacob" to stand. For the translation of מ as "how" see, Giovanni Rinaldi, "MJ [MI]," Bibblia e Oriente, 9 (1967): p. 118.

end of the book of Amos in 9:11. The impossible situation of 5:2, has progressed to the improbable possibility of 7:2,5 which in turn has given way to the certain probability of 9:11. The "booth of David" which in the prophetic perception has fallen will be "raised up." The "breaches" will be repaired and the "ruins raised up."[24] The "virgin" who in 5:12 was fallen upon the ground will be restored. Someone has come forward to offer the needed assistance. The helper which was unknown in 5:2 and only a possibility in 7:2,5 has been found. The Lord himself will raise the ruins and the fallen booth of David.

CONCLUSION

The distant repetitions of קום in the book of Amos provide a signal of thematic development found within the book. The prophecy describes in harsh and demanding terms the punishment soon to be inflicted upon the nation of Israel. Yet, at the same time the prophet interweaves a message of hope and salvation. Through the use of a key word, קום, strategically placed in the last five chapters of the book, a restitution theme is developed. The use of key words is not uncommon in the book of Amos. Such literary activity is evident in other sections of the book as well: the concatenous pattern of chapter 1-2 which ties together the oracles against foreign nations by a progression of key words,[25] the chiastic structure of chapter 5,[26] and the utilization of key words in the

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[24] The mention of "breaches" brings to mind the figure of 4:3.

[25] S. Paul, "Amos 1:3-2:3: A Concatenous Literary Pattern," Journal of Biblical Literature, 90 (1971) p.397-405.

[26] J. De Waard, "The Chiastic Structure of Amos V 1-17," Vetus Testamentum, 27 (1977) p.170-177.

series of visions in chapters 7-8. [27]

This study is not intended to suggest any particular theory of redaction regarding the book of Amos but simply to say that as the book is now composed an element of hope concerning a future salvation is [28] developed subtly throughout chapters 5-9. The presence of קום in the fashion discussed does not presuppose Amos authorship nor does it deny Amos authorship. [29] This paper simply suggests that when the sections under question were brought together the editor's design

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[27] Perhaps the most celebrated being the "קיץ", "קץ" pun of 8:2. See Al Wolters, "Wordplay and Dialect in Amos 8:2," Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society 31 (1988) p. 407-410.

[28] See the injunctions of 5:6,14-15,24 and the prophecies of 9:8,11-15. I have discussed elsewhere the function of hope in the formation of a social movement and in so doing explored the social dynamics of the early history of the prophecy. See Terry Giles, "An Introductory Investigation of Amos by Means of the Model of the Voluntary Social Movement," Proceedings of the Midwest Region of the Society of Biblical Literature, 8 (1988) p. 135-153. See also, G. von Rad, Old Testament Theology, vol. 2 (Eng. tran., Edinburgh and London: Oliver and Boyd; New York: Harper and Row, 1965), p. 138. Herbert Huffmon, "The Social Role of Amos' Message," The Quest for the Kingdom of God, ed. H. B. Huffmon, F. A. Spina, A. R. W. Green, (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1983), p. 112-113.

[29] The growing use of קום to refer to the restoration of "Israel", "Jacob", and "David" from the seventh and sixth centuries might give credence to the hypothesis of editorial activity in the book of Amos from these centuries. This is particularly so if the Amos material is compared with the material commonly designated as Second Isaiah.

included an unfolding salvation theme.

That קום appears in three dual usages in the book of Amos can not be disputed. The matter to decide is whether the occurrences form part of a technique designed to focus the attention of the reader onto a developing salvation theme found in the last half of the book. I believe that they do.

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Ordination.

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Our understanding of Ordination[1] can only be properly interpreted in relation to the meaning of the Church and the ministry within it. Let me begin, therefore, by giving two brief definitions.

(a) The Church is the Body of Christ, of which He is sole Head and King, the fellowship of believing people in Heaven and on Earth.

(b) Ministry (Diakonia) means Service and takes four forms:[2]

> (1) The chief minister or servant of the Church is Jesus Christ himself who came not to be served but to serve and give his life a ransom for many. Matt 20:28. All other ministry is service rendered to and in the name of Jesus Christ.

> (2) The Church as a whole is engaged in ministry, as a corporate body, called together to be Christ's servant, a royal priesthood, a holy nation. (1 Pet 2:9).

> (3) Each individual as a member of the Church has his or her own service to give in the fellowship.

> (4) Within this total context there is what we call to-day the ordained ministry of word and

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[1] This Paper was originally given at a conference held by the East Belfast Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland in 1989.

[2] T. W. Manson, _The Church's Ministry_, (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1948) pp. 17ff.

sacraments of the eldership in our reformed understanding of it and various other ministries.

I take the first three for granted and do not comment further on them but concentrate for a moment on the pattern of ministry as we find it in the New Testament [3] and then go on to deal with ordination in particular.

The early period in the Church's ministry and life was characterised by considerable flexibility and variety. It was a time of missionary outreach carried out by apostles, prophets, evangelists, a time of establishing, overseeing and teaching the new churches. Those engaged in this task were called and equipped by the Holy Spirit and exercised their gifts freely. The main ministries were the following:

(a) <u>Apostles</u> [4]

The twelve called, set apart by Jesus to be his Apostles, had a unique position as those who companied him during his earthly ministry and were witnesses of the resurrection. Together with these who had a unique position in the early church, there were others called apostles who were sent to preach the gospel, exercise pastoral oversight and possibly ordain or commission others to minister. These all stood in a special relationship to the gospel as its inspired interpreters and ambassadors. In fact the word apostle has a

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[3] C. K. Barrett, <u>Church, Ministry and Sacraments in the New Testament</u>, (Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1985); R. P. C. Hanson, <u>Groundwork for Unity, Plain Facts about Christian Ministry</u>, (London: S.P.C.K., 1971).

[4] Hanson, op. cit., pp. 10ff; Manson, op. cit., pp. 31ff.

missionary connotation in that it means simply, one who
is sent. Therefore in the New Testament it has both a
restricted definition in relation to the twelve and
Paul and a wider interpretation. There is no evidence
that its functions were handed on exclusively to
Bishops in what has come to be known as Apostolic
Succession. It is however true that there is an Apost-
olic Succession of scriptural testimony which embodies
the Apostles' teaching, of ministry and of charismatic
gifts. But certain characteristics of the Apostles,
that is their special relationship to Christ and New
Testament testimony were unique and unrepeatable.

(b) There is a further group of those whom one
might call charismatic figures,[5] called by the Holy
Spirit for particular forms of ministry within the
Church and they may or they may not have been appointed
or ordained by anyone, but simply acknowledged and
recognised by the different congregations. These were
prophets, evangelists, healers, those who spoke in
tongues - gifts which some thought had ceased with the
apostles but are being recognised today and were
recognised by Calvin at the time of the Reformation as
continuing, though perhaps with less authority than
that of the Apostles and other ministers.

(c) As time went on the Church was established
in many places in the Roman Empire and took a more
settled structured form though it at the same time
always had an aspect of flexibility, adjustment to
change of circumstances and missionary outreach. The
older form of ministry remained side by side with the
newer settled one and these newer settled ones which
one finds in the later parts of the New Testament,
particularly in Timothy and Titus, gained considerable
significance and prominence. There were three such

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5   Manson, ibid. pp. 57ff.; Barrett, op. cit. p. 35f.

offices or services[6] - that of Presbyter (Elder), Bishop (Episcopos - overseer), and Deacon (Diakonos). It is recognised by many that the first two, Presbyter and Bishop, are virtually identical, that they were engaged in preaching, teaching, pastoral ministry, rule and oversight. The Deacon may have been used more in serving the needy, though possibly also in other tasks.

The question arises as to how all these people, these apostles, ministers and others were appointed, for the word "ordain" does not appear in any translations except the Authorised Version in Mark 3:14.[7] Two answers can be given. Firstly, the apostles were themselves appointed by Christ and they went on to appoint others as ministers of the Word. Secondly, as has been pointed out, possibly some were simply recognised as charismatic figures who under the influence of the Spirit and with considerable gifts assumed leadership in the Church. This may have been their only appointment. We have several examples, however, of people being set aside, appointed or ordained in the New Testament. I illustrate several of these though it is not a full list. In Acts 6:6 it is clear that the chief ministry is that of the Word or Gospel and that seven deacons were appointed by the

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[6]5. Hanson, o. cit. pp. 13 ff; Barrett op. cit. pp. 40 ff.

[7] 6. World Alliance of Reformed Churches. _Report of Commission on Ordination and Ministry_. (Geneva, 1954), pp. 10 ff.; T. F. Torrance "Consecration and Ordination," _Scottish Journal of Theology_ 11/3, pp 225ff.; J. M. Barkley "The Meaning of Ordination," _Scottish Journal of Theology_ 9/2, pp 135ff.; T. Wotherspoon and T. M. Kirkpatrick (Revised and Enlarged Edition by T. F. Torrance and Ronald Selby Wright), _A Manual of Christian Doctrine_ (2nd), (London: O.U.P.) pp 79 ff.

Apostles to minister to the needy widows and give them the opportunity to concentrate on the ministry of the Word. Again in Antioch in Acts 13:3 Barnabas and Saul or Paul are appointed by the local congregation to be missionaries under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. In Acts 14:27 it speaks of Presbyters being appointed by the Presbyters in the Church by prayer and fasting.

For the whole question of appointment or ordination some of the key passages on which we base the teaching on our ministry and ordination are 1 Timothy 4:14 and with it 2 Timothy 1:6. These passages assume that in each church there are Presbyters already appointed to act and that Timothy has been so appointed. It states, "Do not neglect the gift God has given you by prophetic utterance when the Council of Elders or the Presbytery laid their hands upon you." 2 Timothy 1:6 states, "I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is within you through the laying on of hands." In all these cases it was either the Apostles themselves or a council of Presbyters who set apart or ordained others appointed to be Presbyters, Minsters, preachers within the Church and to the Gentiles.

In the light of these passages we may say with confidence that men and possibly women were appointed to minister in the Churches and beyond them; the term appointment or commissioning is a more general one and the term ordain, as a more technical term, came in later. Since, however, our Lord commanded his first disciples to baptise and there was also the command to them to remember Him in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper it has been accepted that, possibly from earliest times, the ministry of the Word had attached to it that of the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. This is not expressly stated but simply implied.

The churches today differ in their understanding of who should appoint, set apart, ordain people to

these forms of ministry. The Anglicans [8] and Roman Catholic [9] position is that the Bishop as a successor of the Apostles is the one who should ordain. We believe in our tradition that this should be done by fellow Presbyters, that the ministry certainly succeeds the Apostles but neither Bishop nor minister can ever repeat their unique once-for-all role and authority in relation to Christ. Since our Presbyterian form derives largely from Calvin [10] at the time of the Reformation it will be helpful to have a brief look at how he understood the ministry and ordination.

On the basis of Ephesians 4:11f. and Romans 8:6f. Calvin spoke of four classes of office in the Church as Christ's will and gift. A pastor is called to preach and administer the sacraments, doctors to teach the faith and future ministers. They are theological teachers equal to ministers. Thirdly there are elders who, with the pastor, exercise spiritual oversight, pastoral care and discipline, and lastly, deacons to serve the poor. Calvin saw these as in one sense particular offices but in another means of service or functions to be performed. He also recognised special powers and functions exercised at particular times e.g. Apostles, prophecy, the gift of healing the sick. While ministry of all these kinds is service, it is also the duty to rule.

In the light of all this what does appointment,

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[8]   K. E. Kird (Ed.) The Apostolic Ministry; S. L. Greenslade, "Ordo," Scottish Journal of Theology, 9/2 pp. 161 ff.

[9]   Greenslade, ibid., pp 161-5.

[10]   John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion iv, 3.4.

commissioning or ordination mean?[11]

(1) The fact of an initial call by God tested and approved by the Church as a whole. There is then subsequent training in preparation for one's task.

(2) It is an act of Christ by the Holy Spirit. Just as He was the anointed one by the Spirit so in the act of ordination it is Christ by his Spirit who is the chief actor.

(3) It is at the same time an act of the Church or of Christ through the Church as the Council of Elders or Presbytery. There is an orderly transmission of ministry and succession.

(4) Ordination is by prayer and the laying on of hands.[12] Prayer is for the blessing of the Holy Spirit, the setting apart of a person to the specific functions of preaching, teaching, administering the sacraments, shepherding the flock and enabling it to be a community of faith, love and service.

Some believe a special charisma or gift is given at the point of ordination or a particular status or office. These are disputed points but it can be said that the minister so appointed has a certain office, is given grace for the task by the Holy Spirit. The laying on of hands is mentioned in several places in the New Testament where such an appointment or ordination takes place. It was taken over from the Old Testament where we find various instances of the laying on of hands.[13]

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[11]   See for a useful summary J. M. Barkley, op.cit. p. 142 and T. W. Manson, op.cit. pp. 95 f.

[12]   Hanson, op.cit. p. 16.

[13]   1 Timothy 4:4; 2 Timothy 1:6.

It is given a two-fold meaning: either the recognition
of gifts already given by the Spirit and now enhanced
or a prayer for such to be given and expected.

(5) In one sense a particular authorised group
ordains, in another it is the Church as a whole that is
involved. Both in fact go together. The Church issues a
call thus acknowledging God's original call.

(6) Ordination is to the one Church of Jesus
Christ and is in this sense to the Church Catholic.
There is no idea in the New Testament of denominations;
all are appointed or ordained to the one, holy,
catholic Church. There was thus no problem of recognit-
ion of ministries in the Early Church.

(7) The minister so appointed is assigned a
particular community or task to perform. He or she
cannot fulfil their task in a vacuum or in parallel to
the Church or in any sense superior to it but only in
and with it. The minister is a servant of Jesus Christ
in and through the Church. No distinction between
clergy and laity is made rigid.

It is only outside the New Testament that diff-
erent views came to prevail, partly because of changed
circumstances and the threat of division and heresy. A
more authoritarian character prevailed.[14] As far as we
can see, the Church at the end of the First Century was
served by Presbyters or Bishops – often more than one
in a particular place – a plurality of Presbyters.[15] It
is probable that the Bishop was an equal Presbyter who

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[14]   Hanson, op.cit. p. 31 ff; Barrett, op.cit. 89
ff.

[15]   T. M. Lindsay, The Church and Ministry in the
Early Centuries, (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1903)
pp. 196f.

had a different function, that of pastoral oversight. Later there emerged one Bishop over a whole area, a diocese. Later still the idea that a minister was a priest came to be accepted, taking as example the priest in the Old Testament who offered sacrifices. In the New Testament, however, it is interesting to note that Christ is called Priest or the great High Priest who offers Himself, the Church is a royal priesthood, individual believers are priests to God and our Father, but nowhere is the minister of the Word ever called a priest.

There are three questions which are sometimes raised.

(a) How far is our present practice in accordance with New Testament teaching and precedence? in the light of what has been said it is, I believe, by and large correct, both as to the nature of ministry and ordination. It is a reasonable summary of New Testament teaching to say that ordination is to the ministry of word and sacraments, to the gospel and gospel ordinances and of course also with elders to the oversight of a congregation and to missionary outreach.

However the New Testament has a greater variety of ministries than we have, was more dynamic and less static, was also open to the possibility of God simply raising up people who were un-ordained to speak His word. To-day one can think of parallels to this in evangelists and others who still serve the Church and preach who are not ordained. At the same time we recognize the need for order, for recognition, within and for the fellowship and its extension, and that people cannot merely act as a one-man band. The New Testament also had team ministries whereas we have been very much tied to a one minister and a minister-centred conception of ordination and the Church. To-day also one of our latest attempts is in fact to establish team ministries within the Church and this would accord with

New Testament precedent. The Church as a whole had and exercised more of a variety of ministry in the New Testament than we do to-day so that we have to make up a considerable amount of leeway.

If however, as we have seen, the New Testament has this broad view of ministry where some simply rose to prominence because of their gifts, and others were commissioned or ordained one can scarcely exclude women from such leadership and service. In other words, in New Testament terms, they are part of the ministry of the Body of Christ as a whole and may therefore be legitimately called and set apart to this service.

Again, if our view of Word and Sacraments is bascially correct, how come that we allow un-ordained men and women to occupy our pulpits and yet not to administer the sacraments? We are inconsistent here with our own teaching. On the one hand we underline the Word and its priority, its preaching and we tend to minimise the Sacraments. On the other hand we exalt the Sacraments by confining administration of them to ministers and our practice here lessens preaching by opening it to non-ordained people. I do not say that the latter is wrong, nor that we should permit non-ordained to administer the Sacraments; it is something, nonetheless, that we should think about because it is an issue which is unclear and needs to be thought through and worked out more consistently than we have done so far.

(b) Are there many Ordinations? If appointment or commissioning is virtually equivalent to ordination the answer is yes. The differences are that to which people are appointed. One could however, I believe, make out a good case for saying that ordination is primarily to the Word and Sacraments and that all others are appointed to different tasks and functions. I am not, however, speaking against the term ordination being used of others. Students at the college, for

example, who are already elders often ask me do they have to be ordained again - assuming thereby that elders and ministers are equal, which in one sense they are. The answer I give is yes; they have to be ordained since the eldership is to ministry in a local congregation, and not the Word and Sacraments, whereas the latter is to the Church Universal. At any rate the nature and meaning of appointment or ordination is determined and carried out and there can be[16] considerable variety of these in the New Testament.

(c) Is Ordination irreversible? That is, is there a permanent character to it? Is it like saying, once saved, always saved? The answer is that we in the Reformed Tradition have given is that there is such a thing as permanence in the Call of God, and His appointing or ordaining through the Church. The New Testament does not envisage Timothy, Titus or any others giving up their service of Christ but continuing through the remainder of their lives. It sees false prophets and wolves within the fold, but in these cases they may not have been called of God at all and their commission may have been under false pretences in the first place.

To-day we hold this same view that we are set apart for life though naturally anyone can be suspended temporarily, be asked to resign the actual work of the ministry if serious offences have been committed either in doctrine or in practice but ordination is to a ministry which is unceasing, which can only be carried out by a life-long commitment. It is effective if exercised in accordance with its true nature of dedication and service. One parallel that is sometimes given is baptism or justification by faith which covers the whole of life and has to be worked out in daily

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16   Ibid. pp. 36ff.

living throughout the whole of one's life. It is once
therefore to be administered.

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THE CONTEXTUALIZATION OF CHRISTIANITY: SOME NEW TESTAMENT ANTECEDENTS.

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In many African and other Third World countries today various attempts are being made to de-westernize Christianity and to express the Christian message and mode of worship in forms that seriously take into account the cultural contexts of the peoples concerned. One term used to describe such a process today is "Contextualization". Coined by the Theological Education Fund in 1972, the term "Contextualization" is used to express the process and practice of relating the gospel message to a people's concrete life situation or cultural context.

This article seeks to demonstrate that even though the term "Contextualization" may be new, the idea is not new to the New Testament and that there are several examples of Contextualization in the NT. It tries to show how the early church adapted itself to its non-Jewish environment as Christianity moved from its Palestinian matrix into Gentile lands. It also seeks to show how some of the NT writers made use of ideas and philosophical categories from the Graeco-Roman world in the expression of the gospel message.

I

Mk 10:1-12 and 1 Cor 7:10-15 as Examples of Contextualization

Both Mk 10:11-12 and 1 Cor 7:10-15 deal with the prohibition of divorce, and the forms of the prohibition as found in these two passages indicate the influence of Graeco-Roman culture on the original Jewish formulation.

·Mk 10: 11-12

Mk 10: 11-12 reads: "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another, commits adultery *against her*; and *if she divorces her husband* and marries another, she commits adultery" (emphasis mine).

The idea of a man committing adultery against his wife does not conform with Jewish practice according to which it was the man who had the right to divorce the woman.[1] The phrase is almost certainly a Marcan addition made in a non-Jewish environment. This interpretation finds support in v. 12 which speaks of the woman's right to divorce her husband. This is certainly a Marcan extension of the original saying, made to suit the Graeco-Roman context in which women were allowed to divorce their husbands.[2]

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1 See e.g. m. Yeb. 14.1: "The man that divorces is not like to the woman that is divorced; for a woman is put away with her consent or without it, but a husband can put away his wife only with his own consent" (H. Danby, The Mishnah (Oxford, 1933) 240. However, it seems that in the Jewish military colony at Elephantine in Egypt in the fifth century, women could divorce their husbands (cf. J.A. Fitzmyer, "A Re-Study of an Elephantine Aramaic Contract (AP 15)", in *Near Eastern Studies in Honor of W.F. Albright* (ed. H. Goedicke; Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1971) 137-68.

2 See the complaint of Seneca on this issue: "Is there any woman that blushes at divorce now that certain illustrious and noble ladies reckon their years, not by the number of consuls, but by the number of their husbands, and leave home in order to marry, and marry in order to be divorced?" (*Benef.* 3.16.2; Loeb, III, 155).

We note by contrast that the Lucan form (Lk 16:18) is cast entirely from the Jewish point of view where only the man could divorce the woman (cf. Dt 24:1-4).

1 Cor 7:10-15

In 1 Cor 7:10 Paul says that "a wife must not separate (χωρισθῆναι) from her husband". The verb is an aorist passive, but the passive of this verb often functions as a middle when used of divorce, i.e. "be separated from" = "separate oneself from".[3] Thus the use of this verb does not necessarily imply that the husband is the initiator of the action. Divorce could come about in one of two ways: either the man sent his wife away (ἀφιέτο, v.12), or either of them left the other ("separate oneself from"). It seems that here in 1 Cor. 7.10-11 we have a case of the latter, i.e. the woman separating herself from the man. The woman's right to divorce the man is stated again in v. 13 where the verb "divorce" (ἀφιέναι) is used.

We should, however, note that such an action on the part of the woman was generally not the practice among Jews. Among the Jews, as we have seen, it was the man who had the right to initiate divorce proceedings, and for almost any reason whatsoever. But in the Graeco-Roman world women could divorce their husbands. Thus Paul's form of the prohibition of divorce, which is the earliest attested prohibition, was formulated in the context of the Graeco-Roman

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3 See W. Bauer, W.F. Arndt, F.W. Gingrich, F. Danker, Greek- English Lexicon of the New Testament, 2nd ed. (Chicago, 1979) s.v. p. 890.

culture.

II

The Council of Jerusalem

One problem that the early church faced was the question of Gentiles who became Christians and their relation to the law. Were they to be required to keep the Law just like the Jewish Christians? Were they to undergo circumcision as required by the Law (Acts 7:8)? To compound the problem, there was an influx of Pharisees into the Church of Jerusalem (Acts 15:5), and they insisted on the need for Gentile converts to observe the whole law.

Another problem that the early church had to come to terms with was how Jewish Christians who observed the Mosaic law could associate with Gentile Christians who did not observe this law and were therefore considered ritually unclean. Did Jewish Christians have to be defiled in their daily association with them and whenever they met for the "breaking of bread"? This latter problem is not mentioned explicitly at the beginning of Acts 15; however, it is clear from Gal 2:11-14 that it was an important issue in the early church, and the decision of the Council (Acts 15:20) was meant to deal with it.

The Council made a distinction between what is essential to Christianity and what is not. As Peter maintains, obedience to the whole Torah and the observance of circumcision are not necessary for salvation. Faith in God in the case of the Gentiles seems to be adequate. Thus the Council does not demand circumcision and obedience to the whole law.

However, the Council stipulated that the Gentiles were to abstain from certain things that the Jews found repulsive. First, there were the pollutions of idols, i.e. meat offered in sacrifice to idols and then eaten

during a temple feast or sold later in a shop. Secondly, there was to be abstention from unchastity or πορνεία, which is generally taken to refer to illicit sexual relations and marriage within the forbidden degrees of kinship prohibited in Lev 18:6-18. Thirdly, there was to be abstention from meat killed by strangling, a method of killing animals that meant that the blood was not drained but remained in the meat. Fourthly, there was to be abstention from blood itself.

But if the Gentiles had to abstain from the things mentioned above, it was simply for the sake of promoting good relations between them and the Jews, and not because these things were intrinsically evil. The Council thus took into account the *cultural context* of the Gentiles and did not impose circumcision on them since this was a purely Jewish practice and was not essential for salvation.

III

ACTS 17

In Acts 17 Paul, as presented by Luke, saw the need to use pagan philosophical categories to establish points of contact with the Athenians. Thus even though his basic message was to a large extent drawn from the OT and from the life, death and resurrection of Christ, Paul found it necessary to use pagan ideas in order to reach his pagan audience.

Paul begins his speech by praising the Athenians for being "very religious" (δεισιδαιμονεστέροι). The Greek word could be used in a positive sense or in a derogatory fashion. It is most likely that Paul meant it in a good sense in order to establish some rapport with his audience.

Paul speaks of how he had been looking at the various objects of worship in the city and had found an

altar with the inscription "To an unknown god". He took advantage of this to tell them about "the unknown God".

Was it Paul's intention to say by means of this inscription that the Athenians had always worshipped the one true God unknowingly? This is unlikely. We should note that the inscription does not read "To _the_ unknown god" but "To _an_ unknown god". Moreover, Paul does not say "_Him_ whom you worship", but rather "_what_ you worship". But even if they did not know the one true God, the inscription "expresses a hunch, a vague notion that the reality of God, his deity, is to be found beyond all pagan cults, temples, and religious efforts".[4]

Paul then proclaims his message of the unknown God who created the universe and everything in it, and who is therefore Lord of heaven and earth (vv. 24-25). In these verses we have a mixture of Jewish and Greek thought. Paul's language recalls the OT description of God (Gen 1:1; 3:14; Isa 42:5). The verb "to make/create" (ποιέω) is also used by Greek writers about creation (cf. Plato, _Timaeus_ 28c, 76c; Epictetus, 1V.7.6).

Paul goes on to say that God does not live in shrines made by humankind nor is God served by human hands as though he needed anything. Here again we find Jewish and Greek elements. In Judaism we find an attack on the false localization of God in the Temple (Isa 66:1-2; _Sibylline Oracles_ 4.8). A similar idea is found among the Greeks. Influenced by Stoic pantheistic ideas, Plutarch can assert: "It is a doctrine of Zeno: 'One should not build temples for gods'" (_Moralia_ 1034B).

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4 G.A. Krodel, _Acts_, (Minneapolis, 1986) 331.

The idea of God's self-sufficiency is found in the Jewish tradition where it is said that God needs neither sacrifice nor prayer (Ps 50:8-13; 2 Macc 14:35; 3 Macc 2:9f.). Paul's statement that God is not served by human hands is something that would have been acceptable to the Athenian intelligentsia. The notion of God's self-sufficiency (αὐτάρκεια) is found in the Greek philosophical tradition (e.g. Plutarch, *Moralia* 1052D; see also Plato *Timaeus* 33d, 34b).

Paul says that it is God who gives to all humankind "life and breath and everything". Paul's language here is based on Isa 42:5, but Luke has changed "spirit" to "life". At the same time he has made use of the triad of life and breath and everything from current usage.

After describing God Paul goes on in v. 26 to speak of the way in which he has created mankind. The phrase ἐξ ἑνὸς πᾶν ἔθνος ἀνθρώπων is ambiguous. There may be a reference to Adam, but the Jews were not the only people who believed that mankind came from a primal person. Probably Luke has intentionally left the phrase vague to cater for Greek ideas as well. Stoic philosophy also affirmed the unity of mankind.

In vv. 27-28 Paul says that God is "not far from each one of us". There are close parallels in Greek writings, the closest being in Dio Chrysostom's *Olympic Oration* (*Discourses*, X11, 27- 28). In Stoicism, however, God's nearness was understood in an impersonal, intellectual sense. For the OT God was near to his worshippers in spite of his transcendence and greatness (Jer 23:23f.).

Paul continues with the statement "in him (i.e. God) we live and move and have our being". This statement is unparalleled in the NT. What is the origin of this quotation? A Syriac writer called Isho'dad (ninth century) quoted a passage in which

Minos of Crete speaks to his father. Zeus and attacked the belief of the Cretans that Zeus was buried on the island: "They fashioned a tomb for thee, O holy and high -- the Cretans, always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies! But thou art not dead; thou art risen and alive for ever, for in thee we live and move and have our being".[5] In Titus 1:12 we find the second line of this saying ("the Cretans, always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies") and Clement of Alexandria attributes it to Epimenides of Crete. This would seem to be Paul's source.

The words "we live" (ζῶμεν), "we have our being" (ἐσμέν), and especially "we move" (κινούμεθα) recall Stoic ideas. However, the Stoics in general spoke of God permeating all things and human reason, and not of humans living "in" God. But since it was their belief that humankind and God were virtually identical, too much weight should not be placed on this point.[6] The whole expression can be understood monotheistically or polytheistically. A Jew could take it monotheistically along the lines of Ps. 139. But the OT idea of God's omnipresence does not adequately account for this expression. The language is Stoic, but it is unlikely that Luke meant it to be understood in a polytheistic sense. This view is ruled out by vv. 23f. where monotheism is in mind. Here the Lucan Paul seems to be accommodating himself to the language of his audience.

The words that follow are: "even as some of your poets have said 'For we are indeed his offspring'" (τοῦ

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5 See I.H. Marshall, _The Acts of the Apostles_, (Grand Rapids, 1980) 288-89.

6 S.G. Wilson, _The Gentiles and the Gentile Mission in Luke-Acts_ (Cambridge, 1973) 207.

γὰρ καὶ γένος ἐσμέν). The words "for we are indeed his offspring" are a quotation from a poem by Aratus of Soli who also had lived in Tarsus (3rd century B.C.). Since in the same verse we hear of "poets" (plural), the author may also have had in mind a line from the hymn to Zeus by the Stoic Cleanthes: "To call upon you is proper for all mortals, for we are your offspring" (*Fragment* 537).

In connection with the citation of a pagan poet, G.A. Krodel comments aptly:

It strikes us as odd that we find a quotation from a pagan "poet" at the place where synagogue sermons would cite the Old Testament. Within the context of his biblical theological presuppositions, Luke could acknowledge that truth exists also outside of the Bible, without accepting the pantheistic content (context?) in which the Aratus citation originated.[7]

In vv. 30-31 Paul talks about the resurrection and judgment which God will bring about through Christ. This was something that was new to his Greek audience.

It is quite clear from the foregoing that Paul made use of Greek philosophical categories in expressing OT ideas of God and creation as well as the message of the life, death and resurrection of Christ.

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7 G.A. Krodel, *Acts*, 336.

*Contextualization   and   the   Eschatology   of   1-2
Thessalonians*

A good example of contextualization in the early
church is provided by 1 and 2 Thessalonians where Paul
takes up dominical tradition and hellenizes it and then
takes Jewish tradition and christianizes it.[8]

The first example of hellenization is the use
made by Paul of the word "parousia".   Though this word
was employed in the gospel tradition in connection with
the coming of Christ (cf. e.g. Mt 24:3, 27, 37, 39), it
is Paul who uses it in a technical way that betrays the
influence of contemporary Hellenistic ideas.   The word
parousia was normally used for an ordinary arrival,
coming, or presence.   But it was often used to refer to
the coming of the emperor, king or some other important
dignitary to visit a city.   Such an arrival was
accompanied by acclamation, shouting, applause, the
wearing of colourful clothing, the wearing and
presentation of crowns, and other expressions of joy.[9]

Gundry[10] draws attention to words and phrases in
the Thessalonian correspondence which indicate that
Paul must have had in mind the special parousia of a
king.   When the term first occurs in 1 Thess 2:19-20
the words used with it include "hope", "joy", a "crown

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8   See   R.H.   Gundry, "The Hellenization of Dominical
Tradition and Christianization of Jewish Tradition in
the Eschatology of 1-2 Thessalonians", *NTS* 33 (1987)
161-78.

9   See E. Peterson, ἀπάντησις, TDNT 1, (1964) 380-1; A.
Oepke, παρουσία, πάρειμι, TDNT 5 (1967) 860.

10   Gundry, "Hellenization", 162-63.

of exultation", "glory". The parousia is said to be a parousia of Jesus our Lord. The Greek word for "Lord", κυρίος, found also in 1 Thess 3:13, was the word used for "emperor". This word was used very often in the first and second centuries for the emperor, and thus it is likely that when the Thessalonians read this word along with the other words and phrases that accompany it, they would have compared the coming of Jesus with that of the emperor.

In 1 Thess 3:13 the Lord is accompanied by "all his holy ones". This most likely refers to an angelic army, as in Zech 14:5 which Paul refers to in 2 Thess 1:7. The angelic army seems to take the place of the soldiers that would accompany an emperor on such a visit. 1 Thess 4:15-17 speaks of the fanfare that accompanies the coming of Christ: the shout of command, the sounding of God's trumpet, and the voice of an archangel. All three motifs are stereotyped expressions which occur frequently in OT theophanies and depictions of the day of the Lord.

1 Thess 4:16b speaks of the resurrection of the dead in Christ, followed by the rapture of the living. Those who experience the rapture are to meet the Lord (εἰς ἀπάντησιν τοῦ κυρίου). The word ἀπάντησις was used technically in the Greek world for the meeting of dignitaries by citizens outside the city gates. The dignitaries thus met would be escorted by the citizens back into the city.[11] Some scholars think that the word is used in a similar way here, so that the faithful leave their earthly city to escort the coming Lord to earth.[12] Other scholars think that they escort

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11   Josephus, *Ant*. II, 327f.

12   So e.g. W. Foerster, TDNT, I, 165-66; I.H. Marshall, *1 and 2 Thessalonians*, (NCBGrand Rapids, 1983) 124-25; Gundry, "Hellen- ization", 166-67.

the Lord to heaven.[13]   But the text does not give any
indication as to the final destination; neither does it
imply that they stay in the air.   Paul concludes by
saying that the living and the resurrected "will always
be with the Lord forever".   Gundry[14] suggests that this
phrase may have been influenced by the Greek notion of
being "with the gods" and that Paul may have adapted it
for his readers.

Paul thus makes use of the Greek idea of parousia
and links it with Jewish apocalyptic ideas and the
dominical tradition about the return of Jesus.   He did
this in order to correct the mistaken idea in
Thessalonica that the return of Christ would not
involve the deceased.   The deceased are raised and they
accompany Christ in his parousia.   Thus they will not
be at a disadvantage.

The Christianization of Jewish Tradition

Gundry[15]   has also shown how Paul has
christianized the Jewish notion of the day of the Lord.
The idea of the day of the Lord was an important
element in the prophetic preaching.   Paul was the first
person to identify the day of the Lord with the

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13   See e.g. E. von Dobschütz, _Die Thessalonicher-
Briefe_, (Meyer, 7th ed., Göttingen, 1909) 198-99; J.E.
Frame, _A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the
Epistles of St. Paul to the Thessalonians,_ (ICC,
Edinburgh, 1912) 176; P. Ellingworth, "Which way are we
going?...1 Thess 4:14b", _Bible Translator_ 25 (1974)
426- 31.

14   Gundry, "Hellenization", 168.

15   Gundry, "Hellenization", 169-72.

parousia of the Lord (1 Thess 5:1-11). A number of points give support to this view.[16] (1) The expression "the parousia of the Lord" (4:15) is paralleled by "the day of the Lord" in 5:2. (2) "The times and the seasons" in 5:1 refers to the coming of Christ mentioned in chapter 4. (3) In the dominical tradition the coming of the Son of Man will be characterized by suddenness and surprise (Mk 13:35-36; Mt 24:37-51; 25.13; Lk 12:39-46; 17:26-27, 34-35; 21:34-35). Paul applies these notions of suddenness and surprise to the coming of the Lord. (4) Paul uses "the day of the Lord" interchangeably with "the parousia of our Lord Jesus Christ" in 2 Thess 2:1-2. Further evidence of the christianization of the Jewish concept of the day of the Lord is found in the fact that Paul later added Christological terms to the stereotyped expression: "the day of the Lord" becomes "the day of our Lord Jesus [Christ]" (1 Cor 1:8) "the day of our Lord Jesus" (2 Cor 1:14), "the day of Christ Jesus" (Phil 1:6), and "the day of Christ" (Phil 1:10; 2.16).

V

Colossians

Another example of contextualization is shown in the case where Paul was in debate with Christian heretics and was prepared to take over their[17] terminology and apply it to Jesus in what H. Chadwick has called a "disinfected" use. We find some examples of this in Colossians, where the terms "fullness" and

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16 Gundry, "Hellenization", 169-70.

17 H. Chadwick, "All things to all men", *NTS* 1 (1954-55) 261-72; cf. I.H. Marshall, "Culture and the New Testament", in J. Stott and R.T. Coote (eds.) *Gospel and Culture* (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1979) 33.

"head" may have been used by heretical teachers in their own way, but Paul was quite prepared to adopt them and reapply them to Christ in his own way.

The so-called "Colossian heresy", with which Paul deals in the letter to the Colossians, was the product of both Jewish and pagan influences.[18] The Jewish component of the Colossian syncretism is clear from the references to observing suggested days, seasons, circumcision, and other Jewish practices (2:16-17). In some strands of Judaism there was a strong belief in the power and the role of angels in mediation (cf. Dn 10:21; 12:1).

Forming part of the pagan influence in this syncretism was the belief that certain "elements of the world" (τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου, 2:8, 20), or angelic beings, were in control of the universe. These "elements of the world" were a series of intermediaries between God and the universe. Each of these "elements" was believed to possess part of the "fullness" (πλήρωμα) of the Godhead" (cf. 1:19; 2:9). They were believed to be the cause of creation (cf. 1:15-17). Various spheres of the earth as well as human destinies were under their control. All this recalls the pagan idea of an ordered and controlled world in which the main duty of the human person was to find out his or her destinies and try to conform to them. The devotees of this kind of syncretism saw the need to acquire knowledge (γνῶσις) of these angelic beings in order to be able to propitiate them.

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18 Cf. J.A. Grassi, "The Letter to the Colossians", in R.E. Brown, J.A. Fitzmyer, and R.E. Murphy (eds.), _The Jerome Biblical Commentary,_ (Geoffrey Chapman:London, 1974) 334-35.

Such a belief imperilled the unique position of Christ who might be regarded as one of many mediators between God and the world. Paul did not question the existence of these angelic beings. However, he stated that the "fullness" (πλήρωμα) of the Godhead was not shared by God with these angelic beings. All the fullness of God and his power resided in Christ (1:19; 2:3, 9). By his death on the cross Christ had won a victory over all these elemental spirits who were believed to control the universe (2:15). Making use of the Old Testament concept of wisdom, Paul said that the whole universe had been created and directed by God's "wisdom" from the beginning. Now we have a full revelation of this wisdom in Christ (1:15-20). Paul was prepared to admit the existence of these "principalities and powers" that the heretics spoke of, but he said that they were all created by Christ and that Christ was superior to them in every regard. Thus Paul's view of Jesus was influenced by his encounter with these gnostics.

V1

1 CORINTHIANS

A few examples can be cited from 1 Corinthians to show how Paul made use of a number of ideas and expressions that were[19] current in his day to express the Christian message.

In 1 Cor 1:3 Paul refers to God as "father". The use of the term "father" of God or of deity was common in the Hellenistic world, and the Corinthians would

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19 On this, see B.Y. Quarshie, "St. Paul and the Culture of the Gentiles: First Corinthians and Some Methodological Issues", (Ph.D dissertation, Princeton Theological Seminary, 1987), especially 183ff.

have been familiar with it.   Zeus, the head   of the Greek pantheon, was known as "the father of men".

When Paul appeals for unity in the Corinthian Church threatened with factionalism, his appeal is couched in language "current in Greek political and social thought".[20]   His appeal to all "to be in agreement" (τό αὐτὸ λέγειν) and to have "no dissensions but be united" makes use of phrases that had been employed in similar contexts of divisiveness by such people as Aristotle[21] and Thucydides.[22]

"Demonstration" (ἀπόδειξις, 2:4), which Paul uses to stress the manner of his initial preaching in Corinth, was a technical term known and used in rhetoric in the Greek world.[23]

In discussing the Corinthians' claim to maturity or perfection Paul uses terms that can be found in various contexts of the Gentile world.   For example, "explore" (ἐρευνᾶν) can be traced back to classical Greek and is found in both religious and philosophical writings.[24]

Paul also used the "like by like" principle here: a person's spirit is what knows that person's thoughts

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20   J. Moffatt, *The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians* (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, n.d.) 9.

21   Aristotle, *Politics*, 3.3.3.

22   Thucydides, *Hist.*, 5.31.6

23   Plato, *Timaeus*, 40e; Epictetus, *Diss.*, 1.24.8; cf. also 4 Macc. 3:19.

24   It is found in Pindar, Sophocles and Plato, *Leg.*, 821a; *Ap.*, 23b.

(2:11). This was a common principle found in Stoicism, the whole ancient philosophy, as well as Gnosticism and even the mysteries.[25]

In discussing the influence of immorality on the Corinthian church in the affair of the incestuous man (1 Cor 5), Paul cites a common proverb: "A little leaven leavens the whole lump" (5:6). This was a proverb that was known among the Gentiles of Paul's time. They also knew that the effects of leaven could be destruction and defilement.[26] Paul likewise uses "leaven" as a metaphor for the corruptive influence of evil (cf. Gal 5:9), and combines this with the Jewish custom of destroying all leaven in preparation for the Paschal festival, during which only unleavened bread was allowed (Exod 12:15-16; 13:7). Incorporated in Christ, who has become for his followers "holiness and redemption" (1:30), believers individually are unleavened. Paul exhorts them as a community to rid themselves of the old leaven, i.e. to clean out the wicked.

When he discusses sexual promiscuity, Paul uses catalogues of vices (5:10-11; 6:9-10; cf. 2 Cor 12:20-21; for a catalogue of virtues, see 2 Cor 6:6-7). The use of "catalogues of vices and virtues" has a long history.[27] It was used very often by the Stoics and in popular philosophy, and would have been familiar to the Corinthians.[28]

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25 See Conzelmann, *I Corinthians*, 65-66. Conzelmann indicates that Paul's usage here has some marks of Jewish influence also.

26 Plutarch, *Quaest. Rom.*, 289f.

27 Plato, *Gorgias*, 525a.

28 For the evidence of the use of catalogues of virtues and vices in the ancient world, see Conzelmann's

It is generally agreed by scholars that when Paul claims to impart wisdom among the mature or the perfect (τοῖς τελείοις, 2:6), he is actually borrowing the language of the Corinthians.[29] Though cautious in his conclusions, H. A. A. Kennedy[29] has demonstrated that Paul's usage of τελείος is best understood in the light of Hellenistic usage. The term features prominently in the mystery religions, and this most likely provides the background against which Paul would have been understood in Corinth.[30]

Paul is in agreement with the Corinthians in their definition of maturity. The mature or perfect person is a spiritual person (πνευματικός), a person who possesses the Spirit and has the gifts of the spirit, a person who is not ψυχικός, fleshly, natural, or unspiritual (2:14-15; 3:1). But, whereas the Corinthians regard themselves as mature, perfect and spiritual, in Paul's estimation they are unspiritual, fleshly, babes or children in Christ (νηπίοι ἐν Χριστῷ, 3:1; cf. 13:11).

When Paul speaks of the Corinthian Christians as "children in Christ", he understands their spiritual pilgrimage as a growth from childhood into adulthood. We find the same sort of idea in Stoicism in relation to a person's development.[31] Paul further says that the

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excursus on the subject in _1 Corinthians_, 100-101.

29   H. A. A. Kennedy, _Paul and the Mystery Religions_ (London, Hodder and Stoughton, n. d.), 130-135.

30   C. K. Barrett, _The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians_, (New York: Harper and Row, 1968) 69: "...some of Paul's words may have received in Corinth a more gnostic content than he himself gave them".

31 Epictetus, _Ench._, 51; idem., _Diss._, 2. 23. 40; 1.

spiritual person has to feed on solid food, while the Corinthians as babes have to feed on milk. This is a metaphor that is found in the mysteries, the mysteries of Attis being an example.[32]

Summary and Conclusions

The few passages discussed above show that the NT contains examples of the contextualization of the Christian message in the Gentile environment of the first century A.D. In the prohibition of divorce in Mk 10:11-12 and 1 Cor 7:10-15, Mark and Paul modify the dominical saying in the light of Graeco-Roman custom, according to which women could divorce their husbands. The Council of Jerusalem in Acts 15 made a distinction between what is essential to Christianity and what is peripheral to it and can therefore be dispensed with. The observance of circumcision is not necessary for salvation. Faith in God in the case of the Gentiles seems to be adequate.

In the case of the *Areopagitica* in Acts 17 we saw that the Lucan Paul makes use of Greek philosophical categories in the expression of Judaeo-Christian thought. In 1 Corinthians we encounter the same phenomenon of Greek philosophical ideas being used in the articulation of the Christian message. In the same way indigenous concepts should be used to make the Christian message more meaningful to the people in any given cultural context.

In the *Areopagitica* Paul makes use of the inscription to "an unknown god" to talk about "the

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4. 18-27.

32 Sallutius, Περὶ Θεῶν 4; Seneca, *Epistles* 94.50; Epictetus, *Ench.*, 51.1f.; *Diss.*, 1.4.18-32; Macrobius, *In Somm. Scip.*, 1.12.3.

unknown God". He also cites pagan poets in his attempt to reach his audience. This shows that the process of contextualization also involves finding points of contact in the given cultural context as starting points to express the message of Christianity. The Colossians passage shows that it may be necessary sometimes in the process of contextualization to adopt and reapply ideas from the indigenous culture, ridding them of all un-Christian traits, and using them for expressing the Christian message.

In the eschatology of 1-2 Thessalonians we find a two-way process, the hellenization of dominical tradition and the chris- tianization of Jewish tradition. This is especially important for modern contextualization. Contextualization involves introducing elements from the indigenous culture into Christianity, making use of thought-forms and concepts pertaining to the given culture; but it also involves Christianizing the indigenous culture, injecting it with Christian values, thereby transforming and reshaping it to produce a new creation.

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1 and 2 Samuel. Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, by
Joyce Baldwin, Inter-Varsity Press, 1988. pp.299 £6.25

In accordance with the general layout of these
commentaries the work consists of Introduction,
Analysis and Commentary. The areas covered in the
Introduction are: (i) the books of Samuel and their
place in the longer history; (ii) composition and
authorship; (iii) theology; (iv) text. There are
additional notes on the temple of the Lord at Shiloh,
the excavation of early Jerusalem and the Bathsheba
incident. Maps are reproduced depicting "Israel in the
time of David" and "Wars during the reign of David".

Unfortunately the Introduction of this work is
disappointingly short (29pp.) and thus it fails to
cover many of the issues which are of central
importance. The principal feature of Samuel is the
presence of the large literary blocks which join
together to form the whole (the History of David's Rise
and the Succession Narrative). Yet nowhere does Baldwin
discuss any of these - the most they receive is a
passing mention. On the other hand, issues which are
much less directly related to this area of scholarship
(namely the Documentary Hypothesis and the principles
of Textual Criticism) are discussed in depth in the
Introduction.

Another point which needs to be made is that
Baldwin refers to II Sam. 9-20 + I Kings 1-2 as "the
Court History of David", a term which has long since
become obselete. She does use the term "Succession
Narrative" on two occasions (p.27 and p.298), but at
these points she is in effect quoting from Noth (The
Deuteronomistic History) and Rost (The Succession to
the Throne of David) respectively. This is a small
point of inconsistency, but it introduces a question
mark on the author's awareness of the state of research
in this area.

Nevertheless there are redeeming features in this

work. The Commentary is very readable and the Additional Notes on archaeological subjects will prove a useful source of reference.

The clue to Baldwin's approach may be found in Preface, where she writes:

> For many years I was engaged in teaching the Old Testament to men and women training for the Christian ministry world-wide. Such students, as well as lay-people in the churches, rarely have the time or the opportunity to pursue scholarly literature, and can be trenchant in their questioning of its relevance. (p.9)

This commentary is geared specifically towards non-specialist readers, who wishes to supplement their devotional reading of Samuel. For the scholar or the serious student, however, its usefulness is very limited.

Gilian Keys.

<u>Christology</u> <u>in</u> <u>Paul</u> <u>and</u> <u>John</u>, by Robin Scroggs. Proclamation Commentaries. Philadelphia, Fortress Press, 1988. pp. 129.

The author states that for New Testament writers statements about the person of Christ, his status, and his relationship with God, are derived from consideration of what he has done, or rather, what God has done through him for the world, for human society, and for the individual.

Thus, "justification" is at the centre of Paul's christology: indeed, the motif of justification is Paul's Christology. All else, including the Christ-ological titles, are secondary and must find their

meaning in relationship to the centre.

For John, the function of Jesus as "Son" is to show such an intimate union with the Father that only Jesus as Son can be claimed as the perfect revelation of the divine reality. "I and the Father are one" means that one can only know the Father through the Son.

It seems, says the author, that John developed his own position in an intellectual environment that had not been touched by the Pauline documents. Yet, despite all the differences in language, concepts, and structure, there is, in substance, a profound relationship. For each, Christology is central (Is there here a formal contradiction with the statement that, for Paul, justification is central?), yet, for each, Christology points beyond itself.

There are implications here for the current dialogue with the representatives of other faiths. Thus, Scroggs writes, "That others may use names different from the ones Christians choose does not of itself invalidate the authenticity of the revealer pointed to by .... different names. Even the highly exclusive sounding claim, "No one comes to the Father but by me" must be interpreted in this context. It does not mean that no one comes to the Father save those who have the correct names, but rather no one can participate in God apart from a mediator who is himself participatory in the divine reality. The naming is secondary".

When writing of the necessity for a transformative act to restore the world to its true relationship with God, Scroggs writes, "Forgiveness is not sufficient and it is no accident that Paul never uses the term 'forgiveness' except when he is quoting Scripture". Something much more is required, for this 'much more' Paul chooses the slogan - taken from his legal language system - 'justification by grace'". But forgiveness and justification belong to different

systems: one is legal and the other is concerned with personal relationships. The true advance on forgiveness should also be sought in the personal realm. This advance is denoted by 'reconciliation', a term found only in Paul among New Testament writers.

It is strange to our ears to find words such as trash, grace, gift, vision used as verbs. It is also strange to find a sentence like the following, "Since the glory is of the 'only begotten' (i.e., the unique manifestation) of the Father, the community confesses that through the enfleshed logos it has seen the revelation of God herself".

V. Parkin.

<u>Paul</u> <u>and</u> <u>his</u> <u>Theology</u>. (2nd Ed.) by Joseph A. Fitzmyer, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, Prentice Hall, 1987. pp. 119.

Here, in paper back, we have two of the general articles ("Paul" and "Pauline Theology") which form part of <u>The</u> <u>New</u> <u>Jerome</u> <u>Biblical</u> <u>Commentary</u> published in 1989.

The book is intended to be a brief introduction for students of the Bible to the life of Paul and his teaching. Thus, for example, at the end of the four paragraphs on Paul's conversion (numbered for easy reference, as are all the other paragraphs in the book), there are references to books and articles by eight modern authors, for the benefit of those who may wish to read further on this particular subject.

Although the evidence from Acts is not ignored, the account of Paul's life is based primarily upon those letters which are generally recognized as authentic. So also, the "Pauline Theology" is drawn from the "genuine letters" and the relevant passages

from the Deutero- Pauline works are treated separately.

Paul's theology is seen as functional and there is excellent treatment of such subjects as law and justification. But these, and all other aspects of the work of Christ are shown to have "Christ himself at the center of soteriology, and all else in Paul's teaching has to be orientated to this Christocentric soteriology".

Within a compass of eighty four pages it is not possible to give a separate section of the book to each aspect of Paul's theology, but the disadvantage of not having all of Paul's teaching about, say, the Spirit in one section is largely overcome by the index of subjects, in which are listed the numbers of paragraphs relevant to the Spirit.

In addition to the index of subjects, there is also an index of modern authors, and a general bibliography. It would have been useful for the students, for whom the book is intended, if there had also been an index of the biblical passages cited.

It is difficult, in such an excellent book, to pick out the treatment of any subject or subjects as of special merit, and different readers will have different preferences, but I found the paragraphs on eschatology and on law particularly good.

V. Parkin.

The New Jerome Biblical Commentary (2nd Ed.), edited by Raymond E. Brown, S.S., Joseph A. Fitzmyer, S.J., Roland E. Murphy, O.Carm., London, Geoffrey Chapman, 19 89. pp. xlviii + 1475.

The New Jerome Biblical Commentary is a one volume commentary on the whole of the Bible. It is written for all who are interested in religion and theology on all levels and feel the need for an

adequate and comphrehensive background to the Bible.

Like its predecessor it provides an up-to-date introduction to and commentary on all the books of the Bible, including the Old Testament Apocrypha together with 26 separate introductory essays. The essays range from the standard introductory ones, such as Introduction to the Pentateuch, Introduction to Prophetic Literature, the Synoptic Problem, Texts and Versions, The Dead Sea Scrolls and other Jewish Literature, Early Church etc. to more theological issues such as Inspiration, Aspects of Old Testament Thought, Aspects of New Testament Thought, Pauline Theology, Johannine Theology, and finally to themes geared more specifically to a Roman Catholic readership, such as Church Pronouncements.

As a matter of editorial policy the authors are all Roman Catholics, both lay and ordained. The reviewer thinks that in this Ecumenical Era this is a pity and finds the reason given in the Preface that

> it is important to have a volume such as this which enables readers of all religious persuasions to see a representative group of Catholic scholars at work --not the isolated and allegedly liberal few, but almost seventy contributors who have taught Bible in every sort of university, college, and seminary in the United States Canada and abroad" p. xxf.

to be unconvincing and also slightly patronising to Roman Catholic Biblical scholarship. When the original _Jerome_ _Bible_ _Commentary_ was published in 1960 such an approach may have been warranted, but surely in the 1990's when Roman Catholic Biblical Scholarship has long since come of age it is no longer appropriate.

It would be impossible to comment in detail on the actual contents of the commentaries and articles

(though cf. the review of Joseph A. Fitzmyer's essay on Pauline Theology in this issue of _Irish Biblical Studies_) but the standard is uniformly high. The essays will provide invaluable help to undergraduates seeking for a clear and modern presentation of the issues involved in Bible Study, as well as all interested in deepening their knowledge of the Biblical World.

For those accustomed to other One Volume Bible Commentaries, the _New Jerome Bible Commentary_ has one or two idionsyncrasies which make it more difficult to use that it need be. Firstly, it follows the order of Biblical Books found in the original _Jerome Bible Commentary._ This follows roughly the dating of the Biblical Books. Since, however, the dating of some books is disputed (eg. that of Galatians which might be the first of the New Testament Epistles) and since the Gospels are considered first in the New Testament Commentary Section , even though they most certainly were not written first, the system seems to be un-necessarily complicated. It would have been easier to have followed the tradional order of the Books and left it to the reader to ascertain from the Introductions the probable date of each Book.

Secondly, in spite of assurances to the contrary in the Preface the method of cross-referencing _is_ comp-licated and will lead to a certain amount of confusion. It would be a very astute reader who could work out quickly that the reference →Exodus, 3:29 is a reference to article 3 on Exodus, section 29 and _not_ Exodus 3:19! However, for the person prepared to read the Preface, the confusion will not last long and the benefits to be gained from the use of such a detailed cross-referenc-ing system makes the trouble and initial confusion worth while.

The _New Jerome Bible Commentary_ is beautifully produced, clearly bound and well printed and is a delight to use. It will prove an indispensable aid to students but also to all those who wish to gain more

than a superficial knowledge of the Scriptures. To
quote from the Preface: "With a daily use of a tool
such as this commentary many can come to discover the
inexhausible wealth and the freshness that springs from
pages of the Bible when they are duly situated in their
appropriate historical and cultural context".

J. C. McCullough